

REMARKS

The present Amendment is in response to the Examiner's Office Action mailed September 20, 2007. Claims 5, 6, 14 and 22 are cancelled and claims 1 and 21 are amended. Claims 1-4, 7-14, 15-21 and 23 are now pending in view of the above amendments.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments to the claims and the following remarks. For the Examiner's convenience and reference, Applicant's remarks are presented in the order in which the corresponding issues were raised in the Office Action.

Please note that the following remarks are not intended to be an exhaustive enumeration of the distinctions between any cited references and the claimed invention. Rather, the distinctions identified and discussed below are presented solely by way of example to illustrate some of the differences between the claimed invention and the cited references. In addition, Applicants request that the Examiner carefully review any references discussed below to ensure that Applicants understanding and discussion of the references, if any, is consistent with the Examiner's understanding.

II. Allowed Subject Matter

The Examiner's allowance of claims 10-13, 15-20, and 22-23 is appreciated. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the careful review and allowance of those claims.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 3-5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Examiner has also indicated that claim 22 is allowable and depends from rejected claim 21. In response, Applicants have rewritten claim 1 to represent claim 5 in an independent format so as to include all of the limitations of the base claim. Also, Applicants have rewritten claim 21 to represent claim 22 in an independent format so as to include all of the limitations of the base claim. In particular, the scope of claims 1 and 21 have not been narrowed in any way from that represented by claims 5 and 22 so as to overcome any prior art, but has merely been rewritten in an independent format. As acknowledged by the Examiner, those claims are patentably distinct from the prior art, and are now in a condition for allowance. Moreover, for at least the same reasons, claims now depending from claim 1 – namely, claims 2 and 7-8 – are also in a condition for allowance.

The Applicant's submit the following comments concerning the Examiner's statements of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter in the Office Action. Applicant agrees with the Examiner that the claimed invention is patentable over the prior art, but respectfully disagrees with the Examiners statement of reasons for allowance as set forth in Office Action. Applicant submits that it is the claim as a whole, rather than any particular limitation, that makes each of the claims allowable. No single limitation should be construed as the reason for allowance of a claim because it is each of the elements of the claim that makes it allowable. Therefore, Applicant's do not concede that the reasons for allowable subject matter given by the Examiner are the only reasons that make, or would make, the claims allowable and do not make any admission or concession concerning the Examiner's statement in the Office Action.

In summary, claims 1-4, 7-14, 15-21 and 23 are now pending in view of the above amendments, and all are patentably distinct from the prior art. Allowance of each of these claims is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe the claims as amended are in allowable form. In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, or which may be overcome by an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 13th day of December, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

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